



10 June
Christchurch

HuiFono 2025

AI | AI – Bridging Artificial Intelligence
and Ancestral Intelligence

Adult and Community
Education

ace
aotearoa

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He Waka Eke Noa
We are all in this
together

Hui Fono 2025

Theme

AI | AI: Bridging Artificial Intelligence and Ancestral Intelligence

This year's theme, "*AI | AI – Bridging Artificial Intelligence and Ancestral Intelligence*", will bring together educators, technologists and community leaders to explore the intersections of modern AI and ancestral wisdom. Our goal is to foster a rich dialogue that honours indigenous knowledge while embracing innovative applications of artificial intelligence in community and educational contexts.

By connecting these two realms, we aim to develop educational practices that respect and celebrate the past, while also paving the way toward a future embedded in collaboration, creativity and cultural integrity. Join us for a transformative learning experience, where we exchange ideas and practices, and highlight how the unique strengths of both artificial intelligence and ancestral wisdom are shaping adult and community education. This is an opportunity to reconceptualise the role of technology and tradition in shaping resilient and inclusive communities.

Thematic areas

1. **Cultural Relevance:** How can AI tools be designed to reflect and respect local customs, languages and traditions, and ensure educational practices resonate with diverse communities?
2. **Collaborative Learning:** Exploring partnerships between AI developers and indigenous knowledge holders to create culturally informed educational resources that empower learners.
3. **Ethical Considerations:** Addressing the ethical implications of using AI in education, particularly regarding data privacy, bias and the potential erasure of indigenous perspectives.
4. **Community Resilience:** Highlighting success stories where AI and ancestral intelligence have been synergised to build resilient and adaptive learning environments that respond to community needs.

Hui Fono 2025

Cultural ceremonies

Mihi Whakatau | Welcome

Participants attending the 2025 ACE Conference will be following the process that observes the kawa (protocol) of mana whenua (local people).

The whakatau marks the formal cultural ceremony commencement and ending of the event.

What is a whakatau?

A whakatau is a form of welcome ceremony similar to a pōwhiri, but less formal and more flexible. It's used in many different contexts and can be adapted to suit many types of occasions. The aspects that are common in both forms of welcome are the tikanga (values and principles) that underpin and drive them. The two key values are:

- manaakitanga – the process of showing respect, generosity and care for others
- whakawhanaungatanga – the process of establishing relationships

Why do we have a whakatau and not a powhiri?

As we will not be at a traditional marae, it's appropriate that we adopt the whakatau process for our formal and informal welcome ceremonies. This allows us to shape our kawa (welcome protocols) to uphold the underlying tikanga (values and principles) and create the greatest opportunity for all to participate.

What is our kawa?

The ACE Conference will follow the kawa of Ngāi Tāhu (pāeka) and always look to ensure that our first language is Māori.

Pāeke is when all local speakers (hosts) speak first, before handing over to the visiting speakers to respond. Once our guests have concluded their speech and song, one of the mana whenua speakers may then also stand (depending on the audience) to explain in English. This ensures as many people as possible understand what's been said.

Waiata

At the conclusion of each speaker's address, we encourage the singing of waiata (song) to support the sentiments expressed in the speech. We also encourage manuhiri (guests) to respond ite reo Māori, but we acknowledge and celebrate the use of indigenous languages.

The hongī

Following the speeches, manuhiri guests are invited to come forward and hongī (press noses). This is initiated by shaking hands. The hongī is a traditional form of greeting. It acknowledges the genesis of time, according to the traditions and beliefs held across te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa (people of the ocean), Tāne formed the first woman Hine-ahu-one from the fertile soils of kura-waka by breathing life into her through the pressing of noses. The hongī is therefore an intimate expression of coming together.

The role of food

The final act of the whakatau is to share kai (food). This is an essential part of the more formal pōwhiri process as it lifts any tapu (sacred, sacrosanct) aspects that have been part of the preceding formalities. We include it in our whakatau too as the sharing of kai is a time-honoured way to acknowledge togetherness and begin new relationships.

Order of proceedings:

Karanga – call to enter

Whaikōrero – speeches from home side

Whaikōrero – speeches from guests

Whakamārama – Explanation

Mihi – welcome from mana whenua

Hongī – pressing of noses and shaking hands

Kai – refreshments

Hui Fono 2025

Kaimahi

Analiese Robertson Hui Fono and ACE Conference Director

Hannah Pia Baral Kaiwhakahaere Matua | Chief Executive Officer

Vivienne Reti Office Manager

Vivien Beduya Communications

Photographic Services

Our Conference photographer is Jo Moore. These photos will be shared publicly post-event on ACE Aotearoa socials and used in sector publications. If you do not wish to have your photo taken, please let Jo know.

Video

Our Conference video team is Lightchasers. The video content will be shared publicly post-event on ACE Aotearoa socials. If you do not wish to be recorded, please let a member of the Lightchasers know.

Our Conference Partner



Snapshot of the ACE Sector in Aotearoa

Adult and Community Education is offered through schools, specialist non-government organisations such as Literacy Aotearoa and English Language Partners New Zealand, some Polytechnics, Rural Education Activities Programmes, continuing education departments of universities, Workers' Educational Associations, private training establishments, work places, health and social service organisations, community centres, unions, marae and other hapū/iwi and Māori organisations, as well as through a very large number of community-based, faith-based and cultural groups and organisations.

These activities are funded through a variety of government and philanthropic sources. Because of the diversity of adult learning on offer in Aotearoa and the way it is delivered in communities, it is difficult to accurately determine how many learners might be engaged at any one time. However, a recent survey which asked ACE Aotearoa members to provide data on their learners and the range of learning offered by their organisations, indicated that more than 81,876 learners were engaged in more than 7,036 programmes. This is a conservative estimate only but shows that lifelong learning is alive and well in Aotearoa.

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Kaikōrero

Nohorua Hawaikirangi Parata

Nohorua Hawaikirangi Parata (Rongowhakaata, Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngāti Toa, Te Ātiawa) is motivated by his whānau, his iwi, his ahurea (culture), and our taiao (natural world) to succeed. Born into leadership, ancestrally qualified, and grounded in humility, Nohorua hails from legacy leadership (bestowed with tūpuna name, not one to declare), he also stems from political associations honouring legacy to his māmā Meka Whaitiri, and godfather, the late Parekura Horomia. Nohorua has held significant leadership roles including, tumuaki takirua (co-president) of Te Mana Ākonga – the National Māori Tertiary Students' Association, was formerly a research intern for Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, New Zealand's Māori centre of research excellence, where he worked on a project about digital solutions for iwi. By day, Nohorua works in public health. And his best mate is a humble NZ Sāmoan, so check out Brown Boy Bogeys on IG to follow their golfing haerenga. His entry to Hui Fono happened in 2023 in Whakatū (Nelson), a debut as emcee being mentored in succession by veteran, Pale "in the whale" Sauni. A front position that continued in a supporting role at the 2023 and 2024 ACE Conferences, working with emcee Te Ataahia Hurihanganui.



Hui Fono 2025

programme

	Tuesday 10 June
8:30am	Hui Fono registration open
9:30am	Mihi whakatau
10:00am	Welcome and morning tea
10:30am	Tāwhiwhi mai i te tangata whenua: Te Taumata Tapu o Ngāi Tuāhuriri
10:45am	Setting the scene: Introduction and explanation of theme and programme, defining AI
11:00am	Whakawhanaungatanga: ACE environmental scan overview of ACE, getting to know the sector, getting to know who is attending ACE Conference (geographic, demographic, learner demographics, programme types, provider characteristics, workforce)
12:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm	Keynote speaker: Papali'i Pale Sauni
1:20pm	Panel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Norie Ape, Digital Transformation Leader & Technology Explainerer • Nina Oberg Humphries, Co-Founder, Tagata Moana • Tracey Savelio, Creator, Inati AI, and Founder, Tokelau In Tech • Dr Linitā Manua'tu, Managing Director, 'Api Fakakoloa, Educational Services ('AFES) and Enriching, Otara Early Learning Centre
2:00pm	Afternoon tea
2:30pm	Wānanga Talanoa: Small group discussions – AI in ACE
3:00pm	Ako sessions: Concurrent sessions
4:00pm	Ako sessions: Concurrent sessions
5:00pm	Reflections, karakia whakamutunga

Hui Fono 2025

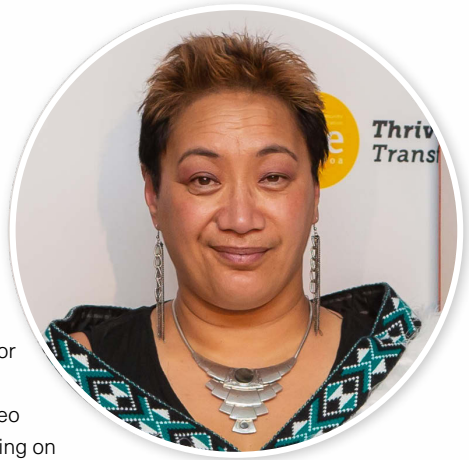
Ngā Kaikōrero | Speakers and Panellists

**Representative on behalf of
Te Taumata Tapu o Ngāi Tuāhuriri**

Charmaine Tukua-Pouwhare

– Senior Educator, Ara Institute of Canterbury

Charmaine Tukua-Pouwhare is a distinguished Māori educator with more than 25 years of dedicated service in adult and community education, particularly in the revitalisation of mātauranga Māori. As a senior educator at Ara Institute of Canterbury, she has profoundly influenced the delivery of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori programmes, focusing on foundational education in adult literacy, broadcasting and engineering. Throughout her tenure, Charmaine has served as a kaiako, programme leader, and currently as the operations coordinator at Te Puna Wānaka, Ara's Māori education unit. Her leadership has been instrumental in enhancing Māori learners' engagement and success in tertiary education. Her commitment extends beyond the learning environment; Charmaine has actively contributed to national literacy training and qualification delivery, ensuring culturally responsive educational practices. She was honoured with the 2022 ACE Aotearoa Educator of the Year – Tangata Whenua award, recognising her outstanding service and contribution to Māori education.



Keynote speaker

Papali'i Pale Sauni

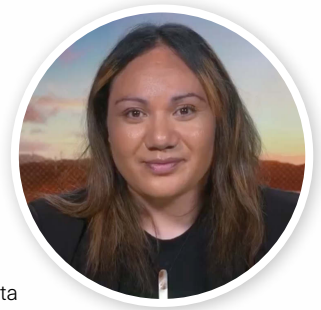
Papali'i Pale Sauni holds the title of Papali'i from Savai'i representing the villages of Faleula and Faleasi'u. Pale is a leader in the education, health and social services sectors. He is described as one of our ancestrally qualified leaders, a revered mentor to many, who has spent a lifetime of authoring his own philosophies that centre cultural intelligence manifested in his science of bridging traditional knowledge and ceremonial approaches prevalent in his work. Pale is well known in Pacific and Māori communities across Aotearoa. He was a nominee in the 2022 Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year Awards and a recipient of the 2023 Sunpix Awards Category for Pacific Services in Health and Wellbeing. Pale served on the ACE Aotearoa Board from 2014-2024, has been an advisor on Tertiary and Pacific Education Strategies, and a longstanding leader and master of ceremony to the annual Hui Fono. Ode to his popularity with purpose, he's taking a longitudinal approach to documenting his praxis in cultural centredness and asserting ownership with deep architecture of what he calls the "pedagogy of humour".



Panellists

Tracey Savelio – Founder of Tokelau in Tech, Creator of Inati AI

Tracey Savelio is a proud Tokelauan woman from Porirua, with ancestral ties to Nukunonu, Fakaofu, and Atafu. She is the founder of Tokelau in Tech and creator of Inati AI, initiatives focused on making data, technology, and AI accessible while preserving and celebrating Pasifika culture. Tracey, who's also a technology and data governance analyst at Kiwibank, has transitioned into mentoring to support women in the Kiwibank workforce, recent graduates and members of her heritage community. Her work is grounded in the belief that emerging technologies should empower, not exclude them. Through social media and community engagement, she raises awareness about AI and digital tools across generations. Tokelau in Tech reflects her commitment to culturally informed solutions, combining innovation with identity to uplift Pacific communities.



Nina Oberg Humphries – Co-Founder, Executive Director, Tagata Moana Trust

Nina Oberg Humphries is a proud second-generation New Zealand-born Cook Islander and a dedicated multimedia artist. Her work focuses on connecting Moana peoples to ancestral knowledge through artefacts and traditional Pacific heritage artforms. With a background in management, project design, community education, and Pacific material culture, Nina blends creativity with advocacy to empower Pacific communities. She was the 2020 Macmillan Brown Artist in Residence, is a trustee of SCAPE Public Art Trust, and serves on the Department of Internal Affairs community grant committee. Her leadership extends beyond the arts, championing access, equity and representation for Pacific peoples across all sectors. Nina envisions a future Aotearoa where Pacific peoples are seen, valued and supported to achieve everything imaginable.



Dr Linitā Manua'tu MNZM –

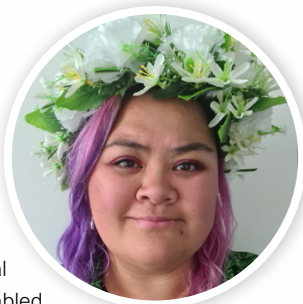
Managing Director, 'Api Fakakoloa Educational Services ('AFES) and Enriching Otara Early Learning Centre

Dr. Linitā Manua'tu, of Tongan heritage, is an academic, author and long-time advocate for Pacific education. Since the 1980s, she has led Pacific-focused educational research and professional development for educators through AFES. Her work has helped shape multidisciplinary research frameworks alongside Pacific, Māori, and Indigenous scholars in Aotearoa and internationally. She has contributed to the Pasifika Caucus of the New Zealand Association for Research in Education (NZARE) and has served on the Board of the Centre for Pacific Languages since 2021. A passionate language and culture advocate, Dr. Linitā has broadcasted on Tongan language and educational topics since 1988 on 104.6 Planet FM and PMN Tonga 531PI. She currently hosts Mapu te Malau, a weekly radio programme in the Niufo'ou dialect, on a voluntary basis. Her life's work is grounded in uplifting Pacific languages, knowledge systems, and education pathways.



Norie Ape – Digital Transformation Leader & Technology Explainerer

Norie Ape is a Sāmoan-born, Auckland-raised digital transformation leader and technology explainerer (a play on words she coined herself). Currently the product and delivery consultant at Whānau Tahi, she supports innovative digital solutions that centre community, equity, and impact. Previously, Norie was the digital product manager at Te Pūkenga, where she led digital initiatives to improve vocational education outcomes – particularly for Māori, Pasifika, and disabled learners – and contributed to modernising operational and learning systems during her time with Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO).



Passionate about increasing representation in tech, Norie is an active member of PACIFICA Inc, National Council for Women and TechWomen NZ. She contributes to the Digital Equity Coalition Aotearoa and the Pacific Data Sovereignty Network. In 2023, Norie represented New Zealand as the Government NGO Delegate at the 67th Commission on the Status of Women in New York, advocating for gender equity through technology and education. Committed to community upliftment, Norie actively fosters digital inclusion and advocates for equitable access to technology and education for all.

Ako Session (Workshop) Facilitators

Bring a device and curiosity to all sessions! These are designed to be interactive and practical facilitated experiences. Apply what you learn, in real time, using real scenarios.

Concurrent sessions 3:00pm – 4:00pm | 4:00pm – 5:00pm

Facilitator	Description
Norie Ape	Leveraging AI for Innovation in Vocational Education: A Pathway to Equity
Nina Oberg Humphries	Growing STEAM in Community Learning: Enhancing Pathways with AI for Pacific Families in Ōtautahi
Tracey Savelio	Inati AI & Tokelau in Tech: Culturally Informed Solutions through AI and Social Media
Doron Semu	Siapo Making: Crafting Cultural Treasures through the Art of Bark and Fabric
Will (Viriamu) Fleming	DigiKōr: Storytelling, AI and Cultural Preservation in Communication Education
Shenaegh Hayde and Te Ao Marama Apiata	AI at Ara Institute of Canterbury

Leveraging AI for Innovation in Vocational Education: A Pathway to Equity

Norie Ape, Digital Transformation Leader & Technology Explainerer

Join Norie Ape for a hands-on workshop focused on integrating AI into vocational education to drive innovation and equity. Drawing on her experience leading digital transformation in New Zealand's vocational training sector, including her time with Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO), Norie will guide participants through practical applications of AI to enhance outcomes for Māori, Pasifika and disabled learners.

This session will explore how AI can personalise learning, increase accessibility, and support diverse student needs. Norie will also unpack how AI tools can bridge gaps in educational equity, ensuring that all learners have access to cutting-edge technology and future-ready opportunities. Now working at the nexus of digital health and social impact at Whānau Tahī, Norie brings a unique cross-sector lens to this kaupapa. Ideal for educators, tech enthusiasts and community leaders, this workshop will provide actionable tools and insights to embrace AI for inclusive future-focused education.

Norie Ape is a Sāmoan-born, Auckland-raised digital transformation leader and technology explainerer (a play on words she coined herself). Currently the product and delivery consultant at Whānau Tahī, she supports innovative digital solutions that centre community, equity and impact. Previously, Norie was the digital product manager at Te Pūkenga, where she led digital initiatives to improve vocational education outcomes – particularly for Māori, Pasifika, and disabled learners – and contributed to modernising operational and learning systems during her time with BCITO.

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Growing STEAM in Community Learning: Enhancing Pathways with AI for Pacific Families in Ōtautahi

Nina Oberg Humphries, Co-Founder, Executive Director,
Tagata Moana Trust

This workshop explores how AI and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) education are creating new learning pathways for Pacific children and their

families in Ōtautahi. Designed for community educators and leaders, the session highlights practical, culturally responsive approaches to integrating AI into community learning environments. Participants will hear insights from local initiatives that empower Pacific learners by connecting digital tools with cultural identity, creativity, and collaboration. The workshop will also cover how AI is being used to support family engagement, language revitalisation and future- focused career pathways. Grounded in equity and inclusion, this session offers inspiration and practical ideas for those working to ensure Pacific learners thrive in Aotearoa's digital future.

Nina Oberg Humphries is a proud second-generation New Zealand-born Cook Islander and a dedicated multimedia artist. Her work focuses on connecting Moana peoples to ancestral knowledge through artefacts and traditional Pacific heritage artforms. With a background in management, project design, community education, and Pacific material culture, Nina blends creativity with advocacy to empower Pacific communities. She was the 2020 Macmillan Brown Artist in Residence, is a trustee of SCAPE Public Art Trust, and serves on the Department of Internal Affairs community grant committee. Her leadership extends beyond the arts, championing access, equity, and representation for Pacific peoples across all sectors. Nina envisions a future Aotearoa where Pacific peoples are seen, valued, and supported to achieve everything imaginable.

Inati AI & Tokelau in Tech: Culturally Informed Solutions through AI and Social Media

Tracey Savelio, Founder of Tokelau in Tech, Creator of Inati AI

This workshop explores how Inati AI and Tokelau in Tech use artificial intelligence and social media strategies to support culturally grounded solutions for Tokelau communities. Led by creator Tracey Savelio, a proud Tokelauan technologist, the session will unpack how emerging technologies can be harnessed to preserve culture, promote digital inclusion, and empower intergenerational learning. Participants will gain insight into AI tools, content creation, and storytelling methods that amplify Tokelauan identity in online spaces. The workshop will also explore the ethical use of data and the importance of cultural frameworks when designing digital solutions for Pacific peoples. Practical and values-driven, this session is ideal for educators, community leaders, and creatives who want to engage with tech while honouring cultural knowledge systems.

Tracey Savelio is a proud Tokelauan woman from Porirua, with ancestral ties to Nukunonu, Fakaofu, and Atafu. She is the founder of Tokelau in Tech and creator of Inati AI, initiatives focused on making data, technology, and AI accessible while preserving and celebrating Pasifika culture. Tracey, who's also a technology and data governance analyst at Kiwibank, has transitioned into mentoring to support women in the Kiwibank workforce, recent

graduates and members of her heritage community. Her work is grounded in the belief that emerging technologies should empower, not exclude them. Through social media and community engagement, she raises awareness about AI and digital tools across generations. Tokelau in Tech reflects her commitment to culturally informed solutions, combining innovation with identity to uplift Pacific communities.

Siapo Making: Crafting Cultural Treasures through the Art of Bark and Fabric

Doron Semu, Registered Nurse and Siapo Maker

Note this practical workshop will continue into the next session. Selecting this workshop will require you to attend both sessions.

In this hands-on workshop led by siapo maker Doron Semu, participants will learn the traditional process of turning the bark of the u'a (paper mulberry bark) into beautiful fabric. The process begins by carefully peeling the outer bark with an asi (sharp shell) and beating it into a thin cloth, creating a medium for cultural expression and connection. This workshop offers a unique opportunity to explore the art of siapo, an integral part of Sāmoan heritage, while building a sense of community. As Doron shares, "The purpose is for us as a community to 19th Hui Fono 2025 come together and make measina (treasures) from our culture." Through the practice of siapo, participants will engage in talanoa, share experiences and create a safe space for like-minded individuals to connect. Join us to learn the traditional craft of siapo – from bark to fabric.

Doron Semu (Sāmoan – Falelatai, Salelesi, Asau, Falelima; New Zealand European) is a siapo maker based in Māngere, Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Drawing from his Sāmoan and Palagi heritage, he learned his craft under the guidance of Tufuga Fa'apito Lesatele of Vailoa, Palauli. Doron's practice is dedicated to preserving and expanding the art of siapo. He imagines a future where every Sāmoan home is adorned with their own cloth and patterns. Through his community workshops, Doron fosters visibility and joy for the MVPFAFF+ (Mahu, Vaka Sa Lewa Lewa, Palopa, Fa'afafine, Akava'ine, Fakalaiti and Fakafafine) Rainbow Pasifika community. His efforts create safe spaces and offer opportunities for Pasifika Rainbow communities, while building a growing network of siapo makers in Aotearoa.



DigiKōr: Storytelling, AI and Cultural Preservation in Community Education

Will (Viriamu) Fleming, Founder, CEO, Campfire Studios

This workshop introduces DigiKōr, an NZQA-accredited programme that blends digital storytelling with a passion for community growth. Designed for educators, creatives, and community leaders, DigiKōr empowers participants to tell authentic stories using podcasting and digital media, while exploring the potential of AI to enhance cultural expression. The session will highlight how AI tools are being used to support Pacific and Māori communities in preserving language, sharing intergenerational knowledge and building digital skills. Participants will gain insight into how culturally grounded storytelling frameworks can be integrated into educational and community settings to engage learners of all ages. Join us to experience how DigiKōr champions digital education, celebrates identity, and fosters inclusive future-ready learning.

Will Fleming is a Cook Islands video director, podcast producer and founder of Campfire Studios in Auckland, dedicated to amplifying Māori and Pasifika voices through digital storytelling. With a background in broadcast television (Sky, TVNZ, TV3) and experience as a digital technology lecturer at MIT, Will blends industry expertise with a strong commitment to community and culture. His work includes the NZQA-accredited DigiKōr podcasting programme and the Instruments of the Moana docuseries – projects that empower youth, preserve cultural knowledge and foster intergenerational connection. Through safe talanoa and accessible media platforms, Will champions authentic storytelling, digital education and cultural preservation. His mission is to create spaces where Pacific voices are heard, respected and celebrated.



AI at Ara Institute of Canterbury

Shenaegh Hayde and Te Ao Marama Apiata, Ara Institute of Canterbury

In this wānanga, Shenaegh and Te Ao Marama will lead a kōrero that will focus on use of Artificial Intelligence at Ara with further insights offered by Shenaegh and then everyone will have an opportunity to offer up their own experiences, we will move through a range of spaces to the explore the challenges and opportunities that Artificial Intelligence and Ancestral Intelligence can afford us as we move into Te Ao Hurihuri. This will be a space for collective wisdom and learning.

Shenaegh Hayden is a Learning Advisor with the Digital Learning Environment at Ara Rau Taumata Rau, Shenaegh supports the bridging of the gap between learning technologies and the learning spaces so that kaiako and kaimahi are able to enhance their capability to integrate technological platforms such as Moodle, CoPilot and other resources.

Te Ao Marama Apiata is a kaiārahi Māori Success Advisor and a part of Te Tira ki Tua and has a focus on advancing the educational outcomes for Māori. This team is made up of colleagues with complementary skills to support the realisation of initiatives derived from Ara's strategic vision and enabling strategies.

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